

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 28, 2015

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

Alan Gross' homecoming is welcomed news. It is unfortunate that he had to spend more than five years in a Cuban prison, and we advocated for his return to the United States. While there are few aspects of U.S.-Cuba policy that are not controversial, his safe return paves the way for a new discussion about the relationship between the U.S. and Cuba.

Among other goals, we have sought reforms to restrictions on travel by U.S. citizens to Cuba and the removal of hurdles that hamstring trade. Given the statutory nature of restrictions on activities related to Cuba, real and permanent change to U.S.-Cuba policy will be achieved through successful legislative initiatives.

That said, recent regulatory reforms to financial restrictions on U.S. exports will increase access to some U.S. agricultural and other products for millions of people in Cuba. Increasing both the limit on remittance and the types of goods that can be legally exported to the island will lead to increased demand for U.S. commodities. Similarly, the expansion of general licenses for statutorily delineated categories of travel by U.S. citizens will have a similar impact while simultaneously facilitating greater meaningful contact between Americans and everyday Cubans. Our hope is that changes to the current trade and travel relationship will advance our goal of bolstering the vulnerable private sector and increasing entrepreneurship while decreasing the role of state-controlled enterprises.

With the significance of your recent announcements related to Cuba, we look forward to Congress turning its attention toward modernizing U.S.-Cuba policy to the benefit of U.S. citizens and the Cuban people alike. Congress must play an integral role in reforming our policy toward Cuba.

Sincerely,



JEFF FLAKE
United States Senator

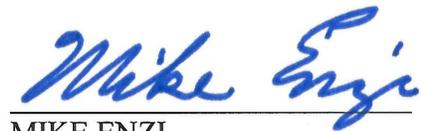


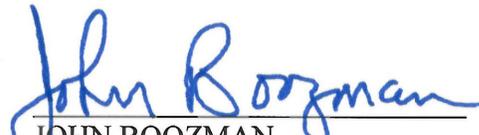
RAND PAUL
United States Senator

The President
January 28, 2015
Page 2


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